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TRAVIS DISCUSSES STATE TAX PROBLEM

Says Deficits Must Be Met
Without Overburdening
Real Estate.
SUGGESTS SUBSTITUTES
Expresses Doubt Regarding
Efficacy of the Proposed
Income Tax.

By EUGENE M. TRAVIS,
(State Comptroller.)
The State of New York is now facing the problem of making up the tremendous deficit caused by war emergency appropriations of \$19,000,000 and the approaching loss of \$11,000,000 excise tax without increasing the State's direct tax on realty. The average taxpayer, in spite of the importance of this problem, has shown but little interest in its solution. This apathy on the part of the public, however, has served as an incentive to the fiscal authorities of the State to redouble their energies toward working out a satisfactory answer.

At the outset let it be said that during the last few years our taxpayers have observed the State undertaking mammoth and costly enterprises, such as the canal, forest preserve and highway improvement, and they have encouraged these measures by their vote. During the same time the Legislature has broadened the scope of government functions, and these same citizens have looked on with approval as the State extended its control for better protection of labor, improvement of health, advancement of agriculture and the promotion of education. Last year's budget, for example, included almost every kind of aid and protection, and this required considerable additional money.

Heavy Costs Not Due to Waste.
It means, moreover, that with this increased complexity of government taxes and public expenditures must continue to grow at an alarming rate. No one wants higher taxes. But every one wants the things that necessitate high taxes. However, these war emergency appropriations and the fixed charges incurred by the vote of the people have recently brought to the attention of the taxpayers the causes for the rapid increase in the State's financial obligations. These citizens appreciate more than ever before that this additional cost was not due to the waste and extravagance of public officials, but largely because the people themselves have declared their desire for improvements which, so far, have created a funded debt exceeding \$285,000,000.

Again, they realize that this sum of money was borrowed. Thus there was assumed an enormous annual interest obligation of \$3,000,000 to liquidate the debt. This situation will require the most drastic financing for years to come in order to keep the bulk of taxation at the minimum. The people of New York understand that they have definitely committed themselves to these great enterprises and improvements. They also appreciate that their costs have passed beyond the control of the officials whom they elected and that all the latter can do is to be diligent in the exercise of economy measured at best in thousands of dollars as against fixed obligations of millions annually.

Resides the increased financial requirements caused by these numerous bond issues of recent years, there are the additional administrative expenses resulting from new activities of the State which have been enacted into law as the result of popular demands. These are the workmen's compensation law, widows' pension, better protection of labor and public health, public defense, etc. The cost of maintaining the State's war veterans, prisoners and other institutions has increased in the same proportion as the cost of living outside, and furthermore the population of these institutions, especially in the hospitals for the insane, has grown rapidly.

Officials Seek Solution.
How to meet these increasing obligations without resorting to taxation upon real estate, already heavily burdened by the taxes of municipalities, is the problem to which State officials and a special committee of the Legislature have been directing their attention during the past few weeks. Within this time many model schemes of taxation have been suggested, but it is the opinion of those in charge of the State's finances that sufficient revenue could be obtained at the present time to the present business conditions without causing any great condition now facing serious readjustments.

Before discussing these it should be borne in mind that for many years New York's government has been supported largely by revenues derived from special taxes on liquor, corporations, inheritance, stock transfers, and income from automobiles, estates, taxes and debts, investments and sundry others, constituting the State's wealth other than in real estate. During the last two years rates on these taxes have been increased, and now that the State's greatest single source of income, excise (liquor) tax, will be soon lost it will be necessary to further increase these and add other sources if the real estate is to be exempted further. This could be accomplished as follows:

The inheritance (transfer) tax law would be amended so that tax at least \$10,000,000 more annually. New York does not tax bequests to benevolent, educational and kindred institutions of other States, nor is a tax imposed upon the estates of non-residents in respect to money or intangibles physically present within the State. Other common sources of income are taxes and it is time that New York should follow suit. The present investment tax is permissive, but it is difficult to compel owners of intangible property to pay it should they for the support of the State. If the present law were made mandatory and suitable penalties provided at least \$4,000,000 more could be added.

SIMPLICITY IS THE KEYNOTE IN ARTISTIC DECORATION; PROFUSION SPOILS EFFECT

Entrance Hall Is
Not a Place for
Much Furniture
—Color Scheme
Is All Important

You have been admitted to a house where, before you ever returned the hand clasp of your friend, you felt the glow of his welcome, haven't you? Perhaps you never met the occupant of the house and yet, while you waited for him, you became convinced that he was a likable fellow. The moment you entered the door there was a greeting for you—unheard, unseen—and yet you responded to it just as you would to the smile of the hostess.

And the glad greeting for you was there. It was all around you. Perhaps you did not hear it but you did see it. Only you are not accustomed to interpreting greetings of that sort as such. The greeting was in the surroundings. Your friend's home spoke to you in the same spirit as he would have met you. It was the ideal home you happened upon. If you are an impressionable individual you came away thinking what nice folks the Joneses are—good business men he; sweet little wife she, and what a bully "junior." If you are of an analytical turn of mind and accustomed to unearthing causes you will set about to find out how they achieved that cozy home atmosphere in a new house.

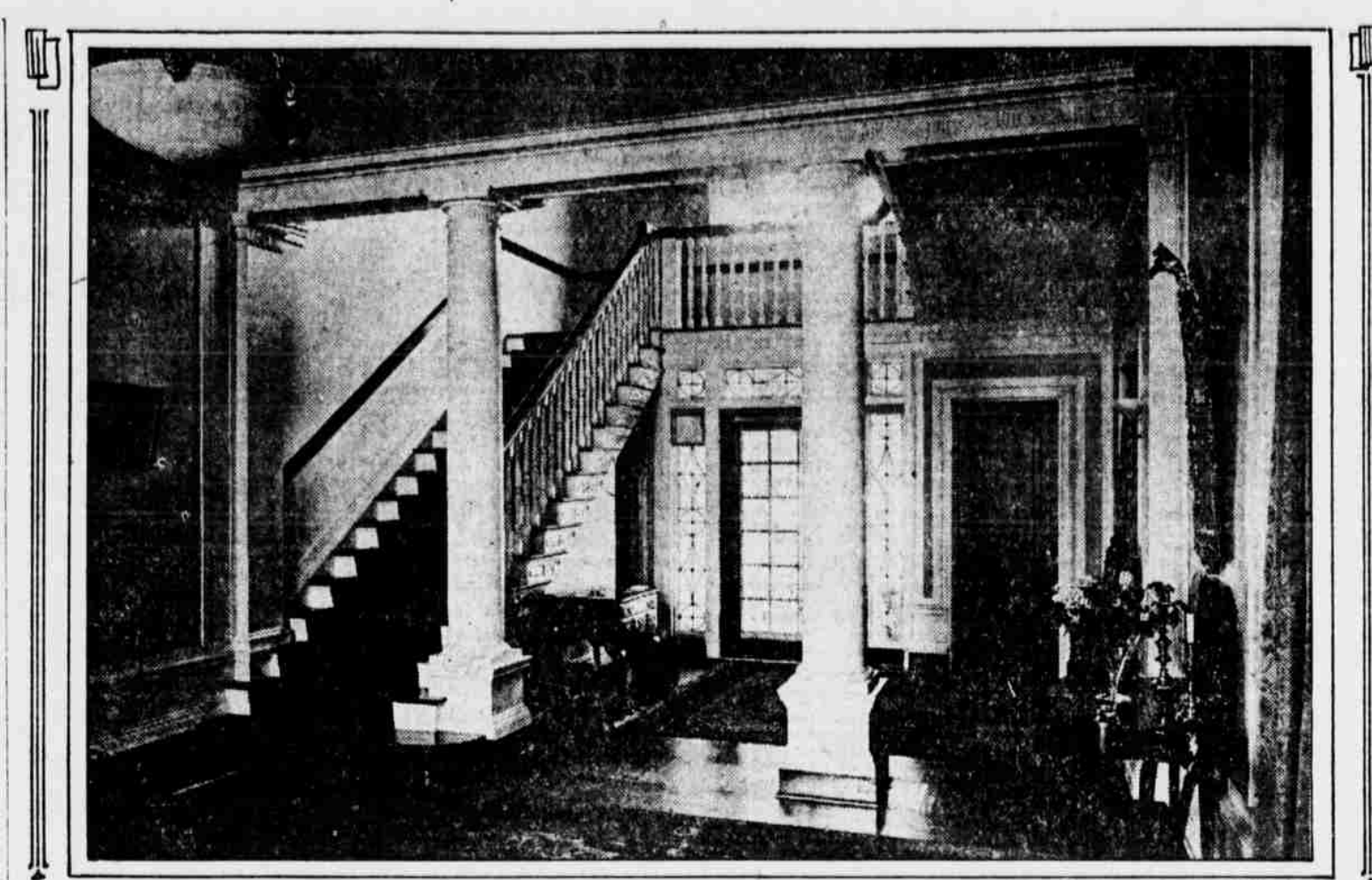
There is nothing like making a good impression. This time honored platitude, which originally may have been Lesson 1 in a primer for diplomats, is quite as valuable an indication to prospective home makers. While the entrance hall may bespeak a welcome, just as it should make for the physical comfort and intellectual satisfaction of the occupants. It is the entrance hall which bids the first greeting.

A greeting, couched in terms of friendliness, is exactly what the entrance hall in a house amounts to. This fact is true whether it be a mansion or a modest cottage. The entrance hall is a place where a man or woman may be made to feel of a mansion which has an entrance hall of a type to be avoided. Perhaps the hall in itself may be unimpressive, but one's attention goes no further than the large brass figure immediately inside the door.

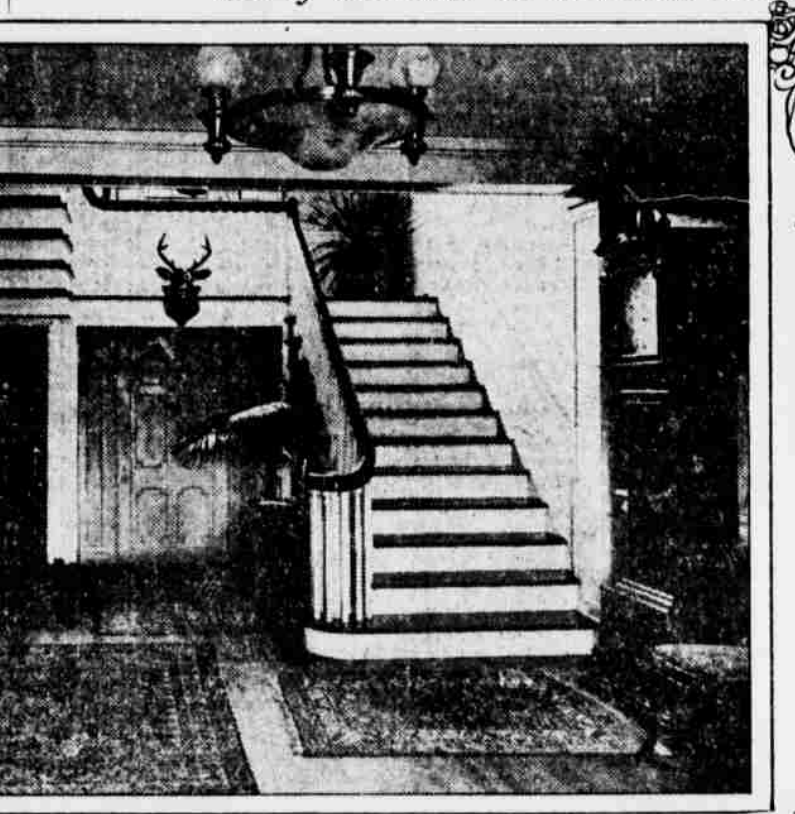
Diogenes had a hard time finding an honest man and somehow one is inclined to infer that the owner of the house has let the question of the entrance hall to his fellow men. Does he, too, feel that he has a hard time to find an honest man? Does he suspect every one? If one had dinner there would the silver be counted before he left the premises? His father made his money in a way no more virtuous will be made. Perhaps he never heard of Diogenes or if the name was imparted to him with the sale of the house he took it for granted that the Greeks had night watchmen, too.

The most effective entrance hall is the one of the simplest and most unassuming kind. The secret of whose charm lies in the observance of a few fundamental principles of art and decoration. Profusion in furnishing is likely to affect one's sense of proportion. The real worth is hidden under the superficial. How do you want to impress your visitors, your acquaintances, your friends or those you wish to make your friends? With your sincerity, by all means. Simplicity in home furnishing and decoration proclaims just that quality.

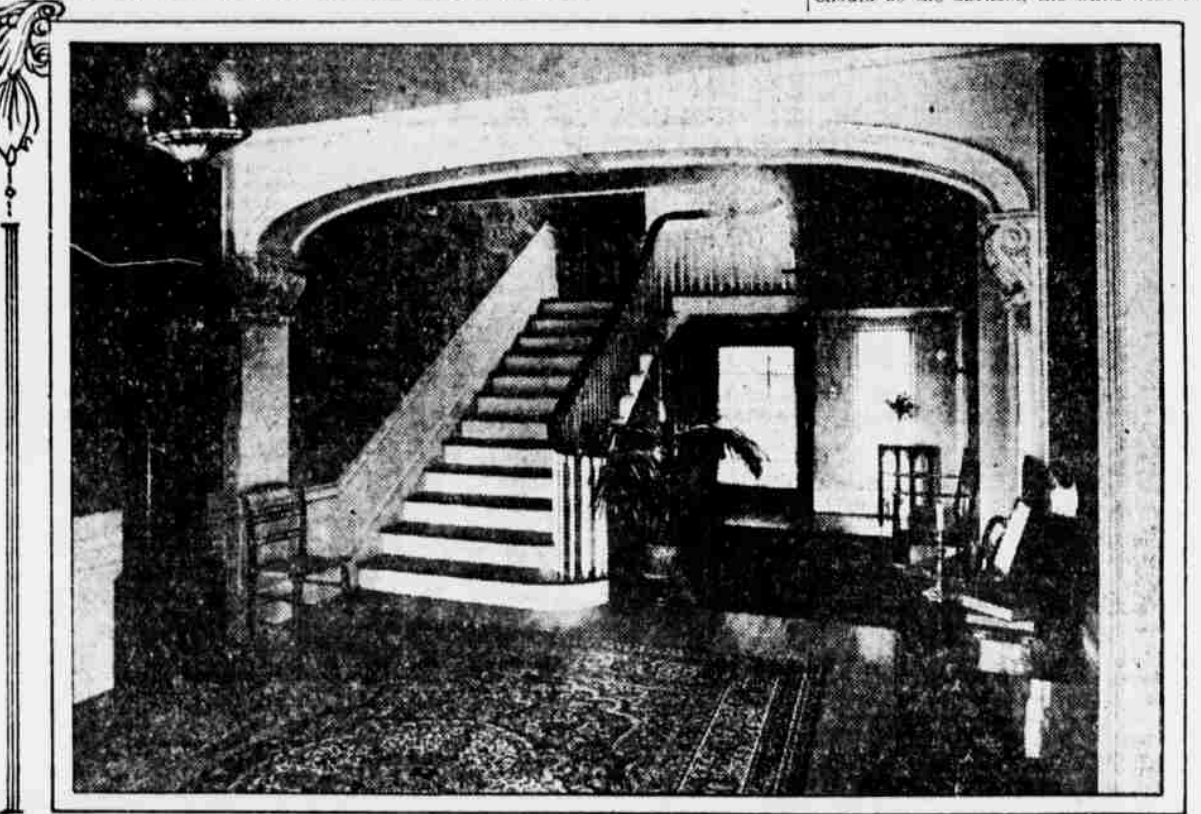
Simplicity is the keynote in the appointments of the artistic modern home. The simplicity of to-day, however, is merely a rejection of the superficial and carries with it no chill of the measure. It is simplicity such as characterized Greek art. This reverence for



IN THE HOME OF MRS. MARGARET C. POST, ENGLEWOOD, N.J., SHOWING EFFECTIVE USE OF COLUMNS IN DIVIDING ENTRANCE HALL FROM RECEPTION HALL.



RECEPTION HALL in the H. N. FLANAGAN HOME, ENGLEWOOD, N.J.



HALL IN THE HOME OF HENRY W. BLAKE, ENGLEWOOD, N.J.

the inviting little reception hall. This house is also the work of Davis, McGraw & Kieselbach, with the decorations by H. Klingensfeld of 12 Gramercy Park. The two halls mentioned are totally different in appearance and treatment and yet adhere to a common type. They are practical demonstrations in the theory of the architects who are responsible for both that good architecture does not necessitate slavish imitation of the things that have gone before. To-day the matter of art as in more utilitarian affairs. It recognizes that which is really good, regardless of period, and chooses accordingly.

At first glance there would appear to be a striking similarity in the treatment of the entrance hall in the home of Henry W. Blake and the reception hall in the home of H. N. Flanagan, both at Englewood, N. J. In both the woodwork is white and the treads and

balustrades are of mahogany; the grandfather's clock bears the same relative position to the table, and the wall paper is of flowered colonial design. There, however, the likeness ends.

The Flanagan hall, one might say, is square cut in design, whereas the curve is used to advantage in the Blake hall. This is particularly noticeable in the arch at the foot of the stairway in the latter hall. In the Flanagan hall an added touch of quaintness is given by the old fashioned paneling in the entrance door. Both Blake and Flanagan homes were likewise designed and decorated by Davis, McGraw & Kieselbach.

The style of furniture in the entrance hall depends first of all upon the general type of the house and the space allowed for this feature. A colonial hall is hardly complete without the grandfather's clock and it is such a charming and useful reminder of the days that have gone.

Real Beauty Is
Often Hidden by
Superficiality ---
Purity the Ideal
to Be Achieved

The good looking odd chair, provided it fits into the colonial background, or whatever is the dominant type of the house, always shows to good advantage in the hall. A tempting cushioned seat built under the turning stairs frequently conceals the radiator. The console or side table, also is always in good taste as a piece of hall furniture and gives the opportunity to add another colonial accessory, the candlestick. Then a bowl of old fashioned blossoms, when in season, is always delightful.

Most halls have a high wainscoting and the standing woodwork of the pure Colonial house is generally of the ivory enamel, showing the eggshell gloss. The walls above may be covered with a neutral toned paper, or in some instances a two toned pattern. The landscape papers which were favored in Colonial days and which have had a revival in recent years should be used with the utmost discretion, and when possible only under the guidance of an expert in interior decoration. Only in rare instances is there a place for a picture in a hall.

The tone of the walls depends upon the amount of light reaching the hall. Gray many persons object to feeling it carries with it a chill unless in the brightest light, and yet there is no denying its refinement and desirability as a background. But all the shades merging into it will be chosen by the majority.

Strictly speaking, the pure Colonial house should have polished floors covered with rag or hooked rugs. The rule for floor tinting is that the floor should be the darkest, the walls next in

shade and the ceilings always of the lightest tone.

Each particular hall must have its own individual treatment, modified according to the general character of the house. Where a person may have the advice of an expert he always has a feeling of assurance in the correctness of his house, whereas his neighbor who worked on his own initiative may cherish a slight diffidence.

But artists, even decorators, often disagree, and no home making instinct should be permitted to go ungratified because of lack of knowledge of the subtleties of interior decoration. Make a beginning, but go slowly. Master basic principles first. They are really simple. Adherence to them will go a long way toward educating a person in those intangible things and qualities that never can be quite explained. First one senses them, then appreciates and finally demands them.

FAMOUS SCHOOL TO MOVE.

Building Now Occupied by Cutler Is Sold.
One of the oldest and most fashionable boys' schools in the city will shortly be looking for a new quarters as the result of a sale made yesterday by Douglas L. Elliman & Co. for Lillian J. and William T. Fuller of the four story and basement building at 49 East Sixty-first street. The Cutler School, which was founded in 1854, has been in the building since 1904. The school was forced to vacate that site to make room for a business structure. It occupied the Sixty-first street premises under a lease. Among the distinguished former pupils of the school was the late Col. Theodore Roosevelt. Hundreds of its former students are prominent in the social and financial life of the city.

The building at present occupied by the school is on a lot 18x100.5. At the expiration of the school's lease the owner intends to make extensive alterations, cutting up the building into small suites. The school has not yet decided upon a new location, but its traditions make it probable that its next home will be somewhere in the Fifties or Sixties, adjoining either Fifth or Madison avenues.

Wants Pershing Square Preserved as Park Site

Alas, in the A. H. H. in the city of the property owners and the business men of the Forty-second Street Association has introduced a resolution in the Board of Aldermen urging that the site formerly occupied by the Grand Union Hotel at Forty-second street and Park avenue in Pershing Square be purchased by the city for use as a public plaza. New York is the only city in the country that lacks a plaza in front of its railroad terminals.

The business interests on Forty-second street say this site is an absolute necessity. The congestion in front of the Grand Central Terminal, they declare, has become intolerable. The resolution of Alderman Hatch has been referred to the committee on thoroughfares, of which Alderman Michael Stapleton is chairman. A committee of property owners and business men on Forty-second street will appear when the committee on thoroughfares have a public hearing on this matter. The resolution of Alderman Hatch follows: "Whereas the Board of Aldermen, as a tribute to the American Expeditionary Forces and their General, John J. Pershing, passed a resolution on December 2, 1918, naming the place formerly occupied by the Grand Union Hotel at Forty-second street and Park avenue Pershing Square; and "Whereas the Public Service Commission has suggested that Pershing Square be sold at public auction, which would result in the loss of a public space; and "Whereas if Pershing Square were left as an open plaza or park the erection of several high buildings around the same should result in a net return from taxes to the city of several hundred

thousand dollars a year more than the city would receive from Pershing Square should be sold at public auction, and thereafter one high building should be erected thereon. Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the interests of the city, financially, as well as otherwise, will in the end be best served by leaving Pershing Square an open plaza or park with a monument in the center dedicated to the American Expeditionary Forces and Gen. Pershing as their military leader; and be it further

SILK DISTRICT ACTIVE.

Greenwich Savings Bank Parts With Four Properties.
Six more sales in the old wholesale silk district were closed yesterday by L. Tanenbaum, Strauss & Co. For the Guardian Life Insurance Company the brokers sold the seven story and basement building 122 to 124 Spring street, forming an L to 84 and 86 Wooster street, a plot fronting 49 feet on Spring street and 75 feet on Wooster street and containing a total area of 10,000 square feet.

DAY TO DISPOSE OF CHOICE PROPERTIES

House Owned by Late Anthony Comstock in List.
The first auction sale of realty in New York city for 1919, Allen Property Auctioneers will be conducted by Joseph P. Day on March 20 in the Vesey street salesroom at noon. The properties to be sold are 219 and 221 East Fifty-fourth street, four story brick townhouses, 20x100.5 each, adjoining the northwest corner of First avenue. A first mortgage of \$7,000 at 5 per cent, past due, on 219 East Fifty-fourth street, will be offered.

BUILDING ACTIVE IN SPITE OF LABOR

Statistics Show Increase in Construction Projects Over Last Year.

GOVERNMENT LENDS AID

Backs Nationwide "Own Your Own Home" Campaign—Is Bringing Results.

Despite the unrest manifest in the labor situation, building activities are increasing, according to affirmative reports from many quarters. In New York State building has started even earlier than is usual, and in all but three cities it has shown a decided increase over the same period of last year. Other States, too, show increases. A nationwide "Build Your Own Home" campaign is gaining headway, with the United States Department of Labor backing it.

The Bureau of statistics of the New York Industrial Commission is authority for a statement of the upward trend in building figures gathered by it showing that only three cities within the State have failed to show an increase in the unusually early building that ordinarily begins in March. These are Albany, Troy and Utica, where, incidentally, the decrease is aggregately small.

The boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens and the cities of Binghamton, Schenectady and Syracuse made larger expenditures for building in January, 1919, than in January, 1918, according to the report.

New building projects now scheduled to start during the spring and summer months are widely diversified in character and include structures of all types. In New York City public and private enterprises for building in January, 1919, than in January, 1918, according to the report.

Housing Operations Planned.
In Brooklyn the paramount feature of the programme of projected construction is the great number of housing operations planned, including speculatively built dwellings for one and two families, apartments and tenement houses, and the large volume of commercial garage construction.

The boroughs of Queens and Richmond during the past week or two have witnessed a marked improvement in the number of new operations brought out, though they are relatively insignificant in size and in scattered localities. The only exception is in Long Island City, where a great amount of factory and industrial building is anticipated and where many dwellings will be created.

Outlying districts on Long Island promise considerable activity this year in small house construction, and in the erection of handsome private residences and the development and improvement of country estates. According to the plans now completed, or in progress, large sums of money will be expended during the next twelve months for high class residential building in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

New York will give New York a close race in the number, cost and diversity of its scheduled structural operations for which plans are ready or in progress, and for which it is confidently expected contracts will be awarded in the near future. Some of the largest and most costly of the proposed new building operations in the metropolitan district is to be located in New Jersey and there is also a tremendous volume of contemplated apartment and tenement house construction.

Many men in public life are urging the most rapid resumption of building. Among them is Senator William M. Calder of New York, who declares that construction will stimulate business. "There is a real demand for housing all over the country," says Senator Calder. "And if I were to offer advice it would be to urge the builders to watch their own opinion in that regard. Among the advantages of them when they are present."

"You are met with the problem of whether you can afford to build under present prices. In my opinion, the prices will never return to where they were before, and while there is bound to be a period of reconstruction serious to your trade it is in the hands of the American builder is such that he can by substituting materials obtain a lower price and make up to a certain extent the difference in increased costs."

Building Basic Industry.

"The nation should immediately invest itself in the investment of its labor and surplus capital in the basic industry of construction, because every dollar and every hour of labor thus invested has earning power and will ultimately change the cost of production of commodities."

LEASE INVOLVES \$100,000.

The Hartford Realty Company (Hartford, Conn.) has leased to the National Fuel Supply Company for a term of years, to be used as a beef and provision house.